

SPEECH

OF

HON. JOHN LETCHER, OF VIRGINIA,

ON

SLAVERY AGITATION;

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 11, 1856.

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## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

The House having under consideration the motion to refer and print the Annual Message of the President of the United States—

Mr. LETCHER said:

Mr. SPEAKER, I do not propose to engage in the discussion of those questions of policy which have been examined by the gentleman from Kentucky, [Mr. H. MARSHALL,] and the gentleman from South Carolina, [Mr. ORR.] I propose to correct the history as furnished by the gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. SHERMAN,] and also the history relating to slavery agitation, as furnished by the venerable gentleman from Ohio who sits over in the corner in "Sleepy Hollow," [Mr. GIDDINGS.]

We have been told by gentlemen on the other side of the House that the Democratic party are responsible for the continual agitation of the slavery question; that they have introduced it and kept it up in this Hall session after session; and that to that party is attributable the constant ferment and ill-feeling between the North and the South on this question.

I have been here for six sessions, including the present, and it is due to the truth of history to say, that at the opening of each session the elder gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GIDDINGS] has been the first, on almost every occasion, to introduce this subject into the debates of the House. He has made regular annual speeches upon the President's message, at each one of these sessions, if I am not greatly mistaken, and has undertaken to give his views very much at length in each and all of those speeches, upon the slavery question, and the final disposition which, in his opinion, was to be made of it.

When the gentleman from Mississippi, [Mr. BENNETT,] on yesterday, had read at the Clerk's desk a paragraph purporting to have been extracted from a speech of the gentleman from Ohio, he was asked whether he ever uttered those or similar sentiments in this Hall in debate. I understood him to say, not that he had never uttered those sentiments, but that he had no recollection of having uttered them.

I have here a published volume of the speeches of the gentleman from Ohio, which I found in the public library; and I propose to call attention to two or three passages in several of those speeches, for the purpose of showing that, if the gentleman did not use the identical language embodied in the extract then read, he has at least uttered the same idea, and, in some instances, the precise words. In his speech in this Hall upon the "joint occupation of Oregon," pages 159, 160, I find the gentleman from Ohio reported as saying:

"Last year, our southern friends expressed great anxiety for 'Texas and the whole of Oregon.' They now see difficulties before them; dangers present themselves to the further pursuit of their plan of territorial aggrandizement. They have suddenly called to mind the declaration of British statesmen, that 'a war with the United States will be a war of emancipation.' They see in prospect the black regiments of the British West India Islands landing among them, and their slaves flocking to the enemy's standard. Servile insurrections torment their imaginations; rapine, blood, and murder dance before their affrighted visions. They are now seen in every part of the Hall, calling on Whigs and Democrats to save them from the dreadful consequences of their own policy. Well, sir, I reply to them, this is *your* policy, not ours; *you* have forced us into it against our will and our utmost opposition; *you* have prepared the poisoned chalice, and we will press it to your lips until *you* swallow the very dregs.

"I would not be understood as desiring a servile insurrection; but I say to southern gentlemen that there are hundreds of thousands of honest and patriotic men who will laugh at your calanity, and will mock when your fear cometh." If blood and massacre should mark the struggle for liberty of those who for ages have been oppressed and degraded, my prayer to the God of Heaven shall be, that *justice, stern, unyielding justice*, may be awarded to both master and slave. I desire that every human being may enjoy the rights with which the God of nature has endowed him. If those rights can be regained by the down-trodden sons of Africa in our southern States, by quiet and peaceful means, I hope they will pursue such peaceful measures. But, if they cannot regain their God-given rights by peaceful measures, I nevertheless hope they will regain them; and, if blood be shed, I should certainly hope that it might be the blood of those who stand between them and freedom, and not the blood of those who have long been robbed of their wives and children, and all they hold dear in life."

Here are passages in a speech delivered many years ago in this Hall, which embody every exceptionable idea embraced in the extract which



was read yesterday by the gentleman from Mississippi, [Mr. BENNETT,] and about which the recollection of the gentleman from Ohio was so much at fault.

I find in this same book other references to which I desire to call attention, for the purpose of showing that these views have been again and again repeated by the gentleman from Ohio. In addressing his prayers to the Throne of Grace, as he says he has repeatedly done, he has never asked God to avert the calamity of a servile insurrection from his country, or save southern men, their families and homes, from bloodshed, rapine, and murder.

On the 453d page of this same book, in a speech headed "Agitation of the Slave Question," the gentleman said:

"The people of Boston did not see fit to interfere between the Administration and the 'negroes' of that city. In the name of humanity I thank them for it, and assure them and the country that those whom I represent never will interfere in such case. The citizen who would do so would be driven from decent society in northern Ohio. It is here, on this point, that I take issue with the supporters of this law. That portion which commands me to assist in catching slaves is a flagrant usurpation of power, unauthorized by the Constitution. My constituents hold that portion of the law in detestation. They spurn and abhor it. I say, as I have often said, 'My constituents will not help you catch your slaves.' They will feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and direct the wanderer on his way, and use every peaceful means to assist him to regain his God-given rights. If you pursue your slave there, they will let you catch him, if you can. If he defends himself against you, they will rejoice. If you press him so hard that he is constrained actually to slay you in self-defense, why, sir, they will look on and submit with proper resignation. In such cases they will carry out their peace principles by abstaining from all interference."

Again, I read from the Congressional Globe of 16th March, 1854, page 648, volume 28, part 1, where I find the gentleman reported thus:

"Sir, I would intimidate no one; but I tell you there is a spirit in the North which will set at defiance all the low and unworthy machinations of this Executive, and of the minions of its power. When the contest shall come; when the thunder shall roll, and the lightning flash; when the slaves shall rise in the South; when, in imitation of the Cuban bondmen, the southern slaves of the South shall feel that they are men; when they feel the stirring emotions of immortality, and recognize the stirring truth that they are men, and entitled to the rights which God has bestowed upon them; when the slaves shall feel that, and when masters shall turn pale and tremble, when their dwellings shall smoke, and dismay sit on each countenance; then, sir, I do not say, 'We will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh,' but I do say, when that time shall come, the lovers of our race will stand forth and exert the legitimate powers of this Government for freedom. We shall then have constitutional power to act for the good of our country, and do justice to the slave."

When gentlemen upon the other side say that they never intend to interfere with it in the States, I call their attention to this declaration, and ask what it means, if it does not mean direct interference with slavery wherever it exists?

"Then will we strike off the shackles from the limbs of the slaves. That will be a period when this Government will have power to act between slavery and freedom, and when it can make peace by giving freedom to the slaves. And let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that that time hastens. It is rolling forward. The President is exerting a power that will hasten it, though not intended by him. I hail it as I do the approaching dawn of that political and moral millennium which I am well assured will come upon the world."

I call attention to these extracts from his speeches for the purpose of showing that these assaults upon southern institutions and southern

men have been made by the gentleman from Ohio, and those who belong to his party, year after year, for a long series of years; and that, so far as their opinions and their power could have influence, they have not hesitated to use that influence and power in discussions upon this floor and elsewhere, with a view of bringing about the evils and the woes pictured in these remarks. They talk about knocking off the chains from the limbs of the slave. To what slaves do they refer? Anywhere else than in the limits of the southern States of this Union? Anywhere else than in those portions of the southern States which have been ceded to the Federal Government, either for local purposes in this District, or for local purposes connected with navy-yards and dock-yards, to enable this Government to be carried on? Where else are these slaves to be found? The conclusion is irresistible, that they mean to interfere with it in the States, and that such has been their settled purpose for long years past.

Then I call upon the younger gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. SHERMAN,] who told us that he belonged to the conservative party of the country, that he stood upon the platform of the compromise measures of 1850, and that he was willing to stand there still, to explain how it is that he is at this time in party association and political communion with the senior member from his own State, [Mr. GIDDINGS?]

Mr. SHERMAN. Before answering that question, I will ask the gentleman whether he approves of the recent message of Governor Adams, of South Carolina?

Mr. LETCHER. I do not; but that has nothing to do with my question, or the subject I am discussing.

Mr. SHERMAN. When the gentleman quotes the language of a particular member, able to defend himself, let him not attribute that language to a party. Let him make his language personal to the gentleman referred to, and not to a party. I might as well condemn the party which Governor Adams supports because of his language. I might as well condemn the party to which the gentleman from Virginia belongs for Governor Adams's language, as he condemn the Republican party for the language of the senior member from Ohio.

Mr. BROOKS. The gentleman speaks of Governor Adams as a representative of the Democratic party. I would state, for the information of the gentleman, that Governor Adams repudiates the character of a national Democrat. He was opposed to the State of South Carolina being represented in the Democratic Convention.

Mr. SHERMAN. I understand that Governor Adams supported Mr. Buchanan. Governor Adams bears the same relation to the Democratic party, as a supporter of Mr. Buchanan, as any member of the Republican party bears to Mr. Fremont, by supporting the Republican party.

Mr. LETCHER. I desire to get the gentleman back to the point. He tells you he is a conservative man, and stands upon the compromise measures of 1850, and yet he undertook to arraign the President of the United States, in an anti-slavery speech the other day, for introducing this controversy into the House. He tells you that all was quiet, that there was no agitation or excitement until the President of the United States by

his conduct gave organization, form, and body to the Republican party of the North.

Now, sir, let me call the attention of the gentleman to a historical fact. I came to Congress in December, 1851; and during the first session of my service in this body a couple of gentlemen from the State of Georgia (Messrs. Hillyer and Jackson) introduced resolutions indorsing the compromise measures as passed at the previous Congress. I ask the gentleman from Ohio if he is not cognizant of the fact, that the party of the North with which he then acted—those who then professed to be conservative, and now complain that they have been driven by stress of circumstances into the Republican organization, did not, to the number of seventy or eighty, vote against the finality of those compromise measures of 1850, and repudiate their binding obligation as a settlement of the slavery question?

Mr. SHERMAN. In the conventions which represented both of the old political organizations the compromise measures of 1850 were declared to be a finality upon this question. Those measures were acquiesced in by nineteen twentieths of the people of Ohio by their political organizations. The Whig party and the Democratic party in Ohio numbered ten times as many as the party which supported JOHN P. HALE. And I say again, had it not been for the disturbance of this question in 1854, such a thing as agitation of the slavery question could not possibly come from the northern States, or any considerable portion of them.

Mr. LETCHER. If the Whig party of the State of Ohio, to which the gentleman then belonged, acquiesced in the compromise measures of 1850, will he be good enough to state how they happened to send Mr. WADE to the Senate of the United States?

Mr. SHERMAN. I think he was sent in 1850.

Mr. LETCHER. He has been reelected since, and was sent by the party of which the gentleman is a member.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. WADE was elected to the United States Senate in 1849 as a Whig, and that was before the compromise measures of 1850. He has been since reelected as a Republican.

Mr. LETCHER. The gentleman from Ohio tells us that he indorsed the compromise measures of 1850. Now those measures repudiated the Wilmot proviso. Did the gentleman indorse them with that understanding?

Mr. SHERMAN. I indorsed the sentiment which I understood to be at the basis of those measures, and that was, that the question of slavery was settled in every State and Territory beyond the danger of interference.

Mr. LETCHER. Then gentlemen indorsed the compromise measures of 1850, so far as they met their approbation, and rejected them where they did not square up with their peculiar notions. Now, the gentleman says that the Republican organization has been always opposed to any interference with the rights of the master to his slaves in the States; but, when I call on him to explain the sentiments of his senior colleague, he tells me that he is not responsible for those sentiments, and that I have no right to call on him to explain his political connection with him. I understand that he and his colleague

both stand upon the Philadelphia Republican platform, and indorse its principles and policy.

Mr. SHERMAN. I ask the gentleman—

Mr. LETCHER. Does the gentleman stand upon that platform and indorse its principles?

Mr. SHERMAN. I stand upon the Philadelphia platform, which alleges that Congress has the power, and that it is its duty, to prohibit the extension of slavery to the Territories of the United States.

Mr. LETCHER. I understand that the gentleman's colleague [Mr. GIBBINGS] aided in constructing the platform upon which the gentleman stands, and upon which the Republican party in the North have taken their position. The gentleman now repudiates him, but clings to the platform which he aided to construct. Let me ask him whether he holds Mr. SEWARD to be a sound Republican, standing fairly on the platform, and maintaining its principles and policy? Does he indorse the sentiments of Messrs. SEWARD and WILSON on the subject of slavery, as they have been repeatedly declared?

Mr. SHERMAN. I can best answer the gentleman by asking him a question. Have the peculiar sentiments of my colleague been put into the Republican platform? If they have not, I am not responsible for them; if they have, I am.

Mr. LETCHER. I will not occupy the time of the House by reading the Republican platform. I may perhaps incorporate it into my speech. The gentleman, instead of answering my question, returns to his colleague. I ask him whether Mr. SEWARD is not in full communion with the party to which he belongs; and whether his doctrines are not recognized to be those of that party?

Mr. SHERMAN. They are no more the doctrines of the Republican party, as I understand it, than those of Governor Adams, of South Carolina, are those of the Democratic party. So with Van Buren and others.

Mr. LETCHER. I learn that the Governor of South Carolina, so far from being a Democrat, and acting in connection with the Democratic party, and approving its principles and measures, would not acknowledge any connection with it, and opposed the platform upon which our candidates for the Presidency and Vice Presidency were elected.

Mr. ORR. He was a Whig in 1840.

Mr. LETCHER. The senior gentleman, repudiated by his colleague from Ohio, was in the convention at Philadelphia which framed the Republican platform, and nominated John C. Frémont, and he stood shoulder to shoulder with him during the late canvass. We did not hear then that there was any disagreement between them in regard to the platform or the principles which lie at its foundation.

I have called attention to this matter for the purpose of showing that it has been part and parcel of the system of these gentlemen for years, not only to war on the institution of slavery in the District of Columbia and in the Territories, but also to war against that institution in the several States where it then and now exists. I will read an extract from a speech made by Mr. SEWARD at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1848.

Mr. SHERMAN. That was before the Republican party existed.



Mr. LETCHER. But its present leaders were born, and had a political existence and position at that time.

Mr. SHERMAN. I ask the gentleman if it would be a fair mode of argument for the enlightenment of the people, to notice the opinions of all the Democrats who have voted with that party from the foundation of the Government to the present time, and to allege that the Democratic party now holds sentiments which it has disavowed?

Mr. LETCHER. We can better settle the question by reading the sentiments of Mr. SEWARD, and then ascertaining whether the gentleman from Ohio will now indorse or repudiate them. Mr. SEWARD says:

"Slavery can be limited to its present bounds; it can be ameliorated. It can be, and it *must be abolished*, and you and I can and must do it."

Does the gentleman approve or disapprove those sentiments?

Mr. SHERMAN. If the gentleman will give me the balance of his time, I will define the precise position which I occupy on the subject of slavery.

Mr. LETCHER. That is rather an unreasonable request. Let the gentleman answer the question, and say whether he approves or disapproves of those sentiments thus proclaimed to the country by Mr. SEWARD?

Mr. SHERMAN. I cannot answer a question of that kind yes or no; but I will state briefly my opinions on the subject. But from what book does the gentleman read?

Mr. LETCHER. From a pamphlet copy of the speech of Hon. R. W. Thompson, of Indiana, delivered at Terre Haute, on the 11th day of August, 1855. Do you deny what I have read to be a true extract from Mr. SEWARD's Cleveland speech?

Mr. SHERMAN. I do not.

Mr. LETCHER. Mr. SEWARD uses the following language in another place on the same subject, and in the same speech, and I ask particular attention to the paragraph I shall shortly read:

"The task is as simple and easy as its consummation will be beneficent, and its rewards glorious. It requires to follow only this simple rule of action: *To do everywhere, and on every occasion, what we can, and not to neglect or refuse to do what we can, at any time, because at that precise time and on that particular occasion we cannot do more. Circumstances determine possibilities.*"

These men of the Republican party intend to effect some purpose. They intend to control this question in some way. They will relieve their country of this evil (as they call it) in the mode best calculated, in their judgment, to accomplish that result. It is exactly with political organizations as it is with man. When he has an object to attain, he bends all his energies to reach it. Mr. SEWARD again says:

"CONSTITUTIONS and laws can no more rise above the virtue of the people than the limpid stream can climb above its native spring. Inculcate the love of freedom and the equal rights of man under the paternal roof; see to it that they are taught in the schools and in the churches; reform your own code, extend a cordial welcome to the fugitive who lays his weary limbs at your door, and defend him as you would your paternal gods; correct your own error, that slavery has any constitutional guarantee which may not be released, and ought not to be relinquished. Say to slavery, when it shows its bond, [that is, the compromise of the Constitution,] and demands its pound of flesh, that

if it draws one drop of blood, *'its life shall pay the forfeit,'* &c. Do all this, and inculcate all this, in the spirit of moderation and benevolence, and not of retaliation and fanaticism, and you will soon bring the parties of the country into an effective AGGRESSION UPON SLAVERY. Whenever the public mind shall will the abolition of slavery, the way will open for it.

"I know that you will tell me that this is all too slow. Well, then, go faster, if you can, and I will go with you."

Will gentlemen tell me that language like this, uttered by a man universally admitted to be a man of very fine intellectual ability—a man who understands the force of language, perhaps, as well as any man in the country, does not warrant the charge, that the Republican party design to interfere with slavery in the States? He here indicates the plans and views which he believes his connection with the Republican party will enable him to accomplish.

But I tell gentlemen that he is not the only one. There is another gentleman, holding a high place in the Republican party, who has uttered language looking to the same result. I allude to Senator WILSON, of Massachusetts. In his letter to Wendell Phillips, he says:

"I hope, my dear sir, that we shall all strive to unite and combine all the friends of freedom; that we shall forget each other's faults and shortcomings in the past, and all labor to secure that coöperation by which alone THE SLAVE IS TO BE EMANCIPATED, and the domination of his master broken. Let us remember that more than three millions of bondmen, groaning under nameless woes, demand that we shall cease to reproach each other, and that we labor for THEIR deliverance."

This letter was written by Senator WILSON on the 20th of June, 1855; and I call the attention of the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. SHERMAN] to the fact, that the Republican party was then born, and that Mr. WILSON was a prominent member of it. Again, in his Tremont Temple speech, delivered at Boston, he says:

"Send it abroad on the wings of the wind that I am committed, fully committed, committed to the fullest extent, in favor of IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, wherever it exists under the authority of the Constitution of the United States."

This speech was made in the spring of 1855, shortly before his letter to Wendell Phillips, from which I have just quoted. And I might refer to language used by others now recognized as leading men in the Republican party, who have proclaimed similar sentiments in several of the States of this Union during the late exciting contest. The language employed by them, if I can understand the force of language, points directly (if it means anything) to interference with the institution of slavery wherever that institution exists—either in States or elsewhere.

Mr. STANTON. If the gentleman from Virginia will permit me, I desire to correct a statement made by him in regard to the Whigs in this House in 1851. The gentleman referred to the votes of the Whigs of the House upon a certain resolution introduced by a gentleman from Georgia, declaring the compromise measures of 1850 to be a finality upon the slavery question. I was a member of that House, and voted against that resolution; and I now desire to say what I said to members of the House then—I could not say it publicly, the previous question having been called upon it—that I was opposed to some of the compromise measures of 1850. I was opposed to the fugitive slave law in its details. I was opposed to giving Texas ten mil-



lions of dollars for lands to which she had just as much right as she had to so many square miles of moonshine. I believed that these measures were ill-advised, but I had come to the conclusion, before the adoption of those resolutions, that it would be idle to attempt to modify or repeal them. I believed that any such attempt would result in nothing, and I had therefore determined, so far as I was concerned, to present no resolution and make no speech for reopening the slavery agitation before the country; but when I was asked to vote for resolutions which required me to give security that I would not speak upon the subject, I regarded it as an insult, and I declined. I never contemplated agitation, because I regarded it as useless. If I were called upon now to vote upon the repeal of the fugitive slave law, I should vote for its repeal, but I shall present no resolution upon the subject. I shall make no motion in regard to it. But these resolutions were offered when there was no agitation. No resolutions had been introduced; no petitions were offered. They were a mere idle insult to those who were opposed to those compromise measures, and I therefore voted against them.

Mr. LETCHER. I recollect very well that the gentleman from Ohio was a member of this House at that time, and voted against those resolutions, and, if I am not mistaken, the gentleman was a member of what he then called the conservative Whig party.

Mr. STANTON. I always have been.

Mr. LETCHER. To what party does the gentleman belong now?

Mr. STANTON. To the great Republican party of the Union.

Mr. LETCHER. Then the gentleman does not profess now to belong to the Whig party, and does not profess now to be a conservative man. He has gone off with a party which has renewed agitation and strife at the very commencement of this session upon the slavery question, which, with a view to this end, has disregarded the certificate of a Governor of a Territory showing that WHITFIELD was duly elected a Delegate to this House, and has undertaken to prevent him from taking his seat without even giving him an opportunity of being heard. Then, sir, conservatism is no longer a prominent feature in the ranks of the party to which the gentleman now belongs. They have gone out from their old connections, and have gone into a new organization. The gentleman cannot—will not say, that the Republican party is conservative.

Mr. SHERMAN. I would like to have the gentleman give a definition of what he means by conservatism, and then I will answer for the Republican party.

Mr. LETCHER. I mean precisely what the gentleman means in the use he has made of the term. Let him define the conservatism which he, as a member of the old Whig party, maintained: I mean precisely that sort of conservatism.

And now, as the gentleman is in for asking questions, and answering none, I want to try one or two more to see whether a remnant of his conservatism yet remains. Will he be kind enough to say whether, if he were assured that a bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia could

pass the present Congress, and become a law, he would vote for it?

Mr. SHERMAN. When that question is presented I will vote upon it as I think is right.

Mr. LETCHER. It is a little remarkable that the constituents of sundry gentlemen from the North should have sent so many here who have no opinions.

Mr. SHERMAN. As the gentleman has asked me a question, I will now ask him one.

Mr. LETCHER. Yes, but you have not answered.

Mr. SHERMAN. I have answered one question by declining to answer; and I desire now to see whether the gentleman will follow my example by declining to answer one I will ask him.

Mr. LETCHER. I do not mean to be circumscribed in that way. I am perfectly willing to reciprocate; but after I have answered half a dozen of the gentleman's questions, and he refuses to answer every one, it is rather too much to turn around and interrogate me. It is hardly worth while to ask him another question, but I believe I will. I was about to ask the gentleman whether he would vote to abolish slavery in the States and Territories, if he were certain that such a bill could be passed through Congress and receive the executive sanction? But I suppose, as in the other case, he would have no opinion upon the subject until the question shall come up.

My friend from Ohio, in his speech the other day, called attention to an article in the Pittsburgh Post, and he read from it the following paragraph:

"But in a very short time Nebraska, Kansas, New Mexico, Utah, and Oregon will be ready for admission as free States, giving the North a preponderance it will ever retain. Nebraska will be divided into three or four States."

While I could not see the application of that extract, the gentleman accompanied it with the remark that the Pittsburgh Post was a leading Democratic paper in Pennsylvania, that had supported the election of Mr. Buchanan. I now call attention to the article from which that extract was read, for the purpose of showing what the position of this Democratic party journal is upon the question of the acquisition of Cuba. This paper is dated the 27th of November last, and I quote nearly the entire article to show the opinions of the editor on this question:

"We have said that the acquisition of Cuba would reduce the price of sugar. We repeat it. Let us see to what extent this would operate. The largest amount of sugar ever produced in Louisiana in one year was three hundred and fifty thousand hogsheds. Allowing one thousand one hundred pounds to the hogshed, the whole number of pounds would be, say three hundred and eighty million. The amount annually consumed in this country is estimated by good writers on the subject at seven hundred million pounds. We would buy, then, three hundred and twenty million pounds from other countries, mainly from Cuba. But this year it is supposed that the home product will hardly exceed one hundred thousand hogsheds, or one hundred and ten million pounds. If the consumption continues the same, we shall buy this year five hundred and ninety million pounds. But we will suppose the whole consumption for the year 1857 to be six hundred million pounds, and we buy five hundred millions of it abroad. Averaging the price of all qualities, and taking present selling rates, we may state the actual price of each pound to the consumer at twelve cents. There is a duty of thirty per cent. on sugar. This adds three and a half cents to the price of each pound at the assumed rate. This would amount on all the foreign sugar bought, as above estimated,



to \$17,500,000, for the year 1857. But it adds the same to the price of the home product also, and thus makes \$21,000,000 as the increased cost of the article to all the actual consumers. Whether our figures are precisely correct or not, they equally well illustrate the principle.

"Now, Cuba, Louisiana, and Texas can produce all the sugar this country will consume. If Cuba was a part of the United States, then the home product would supply the entire demand, and there would be no use in a duty for protection at all. The duty would be taken off, and down would come the price at once to the extent above shown, thus saving to consumers, in all, from fifteen to twenty million dollars per year. If we would pay Spain \$200,000,000, then, for Cuba, the island would pay for itself in less than fifteen years, in the single article of sugar alone.

"Now, Mr. Reporter, since you cannot refute the above view of the case, your only recourse is to call it 'gammon, pro-slavery,' &c., and try and find somebody silly enough to believe you. That is your only chance.

"Now for the slavery branch of the subject. The Reporter admits that we ought to own Cuba, and that we will have it some day. But it says that we must wait till Spain abolishes slavery in the island. When the leopard changes his spots Spain will do that, and not till then. Now, purchase Cuba, and make it a State of the Union, and then would follow at once an entire suppression of the slave trade to the island. The infernal traffic can never exist under American law; a few fanatic dunces in the South to the contrary notwithstanding. To make Cuba a State of this Union would mitigate the evils of slavery in the island. In Cuba, as it is, slavery is a far more cruel institution than is allowed in any American State. Is it of no account to our neighbor to modify, *mitigate* an evil, if it cannot be immediately eradicated? As to the people of the island who are not slaves, they are oppressed and plundered by a tyrannical Government. To buy the island, and make it a State of the Union, would be but to take those people from the grasp of a tyrant and *give them to themselves*. Start the principle of self-government there; let our enterprising people mingle with them and develop the vast resources of the island, and thus found a great and prosperous island State."

When the gentleman brought this paper here, and read the paragraph quoted by me, I was curious to see what was in it; and I was agreeably surprised to find such an article defending the acquisition of Cuba by the United States, and to find his positions so well sustained by argument and illustration. Is there anything in the article unsound—anything which southern Democrats cannot endure?

Then, sir, if the Democrats of Pennsylvania are for the acquisition of Cuba when it can be properly and justly and fairly acquired, if they are willing to take it with the institution of slavery, subject to the same control which exists over that institution in our southern country, it seems

to me that there is nothing in that article which can raise a difference of opinion between the Democrats of that State and the Democrats of the South.

I should be gratified if this exciting subject never could come into this Hall, and I regret that it has been introduced here this session. But, sir, our party did not introduce it. The discussion commenced by gentlemen of the Republican party in two well-considered speeches. Sentiments were avowed in those and other speeches which we were not at liberty to pass by in silence. Besides, when it is attempted to be demonstrated that the South is responsible for the introduction of this subject into the Halls of Congress—when we are held up before the people of the United States as those who have introduced it, and who are seeking to keep up this agitation, it is as little as can be expected of us, that we should show where the fault lies.

In correcting the history of this agitation it was important for us to go still further and show that the South acted upon the defensive entirely, not only in this debate, but in the late presidential election. And when we were opposed by a party which rallied under a sectional flag, nominated a sectional candidate, and urged to secure that candidate's election by the votes of that particular section of the country in and by which he was nominated, it was for us to show that there had been nothing in the past calculated to justify this sectional organization or its fierce war upon us, and our rights and institutions; that that party was the result of principles and views which had been advanced again and again in this Hall and out of it, by those recognized as leaders; that they had given the world to understand that they were ready at the proper time, when the public mind was prepared for it, so as to render success in their opinion certain, to make an assault upon that institution wherever it was located, whether in the southern States or in the districts of country ceded to the Federal Government for local purposes, or in the Territories.

Having done this, and having, so far as my own section is concerned, set that portion of history before the country in its true light, I express my obligation to this House for the attention which has been given to me, and yield the floor.